

Recommendations for Hours of Minimum Instruction
for Intensive Even Start Services
from the Federal Even Start Staff
February 16 & 17, 2005

According to the Third National Even Start Evaluation, "... parents from families that participated more intensively in Even Start (both in terms of number of hours of participation and months of participation) reported that their children do better on literacy-related tasks (e.g., knowledge of the alphabet, numbers and colors), that they read a greater variety of materials to their children more frequently, and that they have more books from families that participated less intensively."

Therefore, the recommendation is that families receive more hours of instruction than the minimum recommendations. For example, the U.S. Department of Education staff recommend that full day early childhood education services be provided five days a week in a year-round preschool setting.

Adult Education	60 hours per month
Parenting Education & Interactive Literacy Activities between Parents & Children	20 hours per month
Early Childhood Education (birth – 3)	60 hours per month
Early Childhood Education (3 - 4)	65 hours per month

On a related note, projects in some of the states they have visited recently have been under the impression that children can only participate in Even Start early childhood education services at the same time their parents are participating in adult education or parenting education. This notion may seriously limit the intensity of the instructional services for children. Local project staff should seek ways to increase participation in all the core instructional components and should not limit themselves to times when both parents and children can participate simultaneously. They recognize that in some states, when a non-licensed facility is being used, the presence of parents may be required when children are participating. They encourage work with the local projects to secure licensed facilities, if at all possible. Many local projects will have to be creative in seeking ways to increase intensity in all core components, yet it is realized that projects that do not have intensive services are unlikely to be able to produce learning outcomes, especially considering the great needs of the families served.